DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 403 713 EC 305 278

AUTHOR	Kent, Carol; And Others
TITLE	Technical Assistance Guide for Community College Administrators and Program Coordinators.
INSTITUTION	Wayne State Univ., Detroit, MI. Developmental Disabilities Inst.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Dec 96
CONTRACT	H029F30010-95
NOTE	40p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Community Colleges; *Community Programs; *Curriculum; *Developmental Disabilities; Educational Practices; Educational Principles; Human Services; *Paraprofessional Personnel; Program Development; Program Implementation; *Staff Development; Two Year Colleges; Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	Michigan

ABSTRACT

This guide provides information and guidelines to community college personnel who are administering and coordinating programs designed to prepare paraprofessionals to work with individuals with developmental disabilities in community settings. The guide is specifically for individuals managing the "Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion" program offered at Michigan community colleges. The guide describes the Community College Initiative developed by Wayne State University's Developmental Disabilities Institute, especially its features of systems change, student diversity, a values-based curriculum, academic skill development, and career path development. The guide outlines the importance of "person first" language, program needs assessment, community linkages, program certification, staffing, disability support, and job placement. A chapter on curriculum development focuses on the core curriculum which stresses seeing people first (not their disability), viewing historical perspectives, understanding individuals' special needs, the human service delivery system, rights and advocacy, field work, areas of specialization and employment, and transfer to four-year institutions. A chapter on program administration addresses staffing the program (hiring qualified faculty and supporting and retaining faculty), student recruitment, and other program issues. A list of products developed by the Community College Initiative is appended. (Contains 10 references.) (DB)

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Carol Kent, Ed.D.
Jean Pfaendtner, M.S.W.
Dorothy Witten, M.Ed.
Tom Hainstock, B.A.

December, 1996

Developmental Disabilities Institute
The University Affiliated Program of Michigan
Wayne State University

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This document was produced with funding from the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Grant # H029F30010-95.
The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the positions or policy of the funding agency.

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Developmental Disabilities Institute

Acknowledgments

The authors gratefully acknowledge the work of all those who have worked on the development and implementation of the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion. Special thanks to Ms. Elizabeth Janks, Ms. Verlina Ajeakwa, Mr. Robert Lasker, Dr. Susan St. Peter, and Dr. Sharonlyn Harrison for their assistance in editing and formatting this document.

Without dedicated support, this project could not have been completed.

Technical Assistance Guide for Community College Administrators and Program Coordinators

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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

Traditionally, paraprofessionals received little or no training or respect for their jobs. On-the-job and in-service training provided basic skills, with little opportunity for development and advancement.

Now, paraprofessionals play crucial roles in the lives of persons with disabilities. Due to changes in service philosophy and approach, people with disabilities and professionals increasingly rely on paraprofessionals for support. Paraprofessionals are becoming major contributors in delivering all phases of support services—less commonly in large isolated settings and increasingly in support of life within communities.

The Developmental Disabilities Institute

The Developmental Disabilities Institute (DDI), the *University Affiliated Program of Michigan*, has provided significant leadership in addressing issues and needs relevant to the training of paraprofessionals who work with, or plan to work with, persons with disabilities. The Developmental Disabilities Institute is one of more than 60 University Affiliated Programs (UAPs) throughout the country. The mission of the Institute is to contribute to the development of inclusive communities and quality of life for people with disabilities and their families. The mission of the DDI is accomplished through the following program areas:

Education: The Education program fosters individual excellence through university, paraprofessional, parent and consumer education.

Community Support: The Community Support program promotes service program excellence through the collaborative provision of new learning opportunities and support for experimentation and reflection.

Research and Dissemination: The Research and Dissemination program promotes education and service excellence through thoughtful research, evaluation, and information dissemination.

The Institute is located at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. With more than 32,000 students, Wayne State University continues to be one of the foremost urban universities in the country, addressing urban issues with direct involvement of its academic units, service programs, and centers and institutes. The Institute builds on this heritage and on these resources to affect the lives of children and families in the Detroit area and throughout the state of Michigan.

Paraprofessional Training Initiative

Over the past several years, the Institute's efforts included assessing paraprofessional training needs and developing strategies to address those needs. Furthermore, planning efforts resulted in several federally funded projects designed to provide paraprofessional training through community college coursework in Michigan. These early project development efforts of the Developmental Disabilities Institute provided a foundation on which to develop expanded plans and gain support from a wide variety of agencies and groups within the state. Initial efforts included:

- Identifying paraprofessional training needs in Michigan through a multi-agency consortium;
- Developing and teaching courses in developmental disabilities in two community colleges near Detroit; and
- Providing numerous in-service training opportunities for paraprofessionals in the state.

Highland Park Community College in Highland Park, Michigan, became the first community college to offer the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion as originally designed by Institute staff. It served as the demonstration site for the program. Schoolcraft College in Livonia, Michigan, was the first college to adapt its existing "Special Needs" Program using some elements of the curriculum developed at DDI.

Program Options: The community college program was designed to offer a number of options for students. Each student has been guided to plan a program to meet his or her personal and career goals. Most colleges also have made provisions for students to pursue their programs either part-time or full-time. Options include:

- one-year certificate
- two-year Associate's Degree
- opportunities for specialization
- possible transfer to four-year colleges and universities

Opportunities in Disability-Related Fields: The curriculum is infused with opportunities for students to learn about various disability-related career areas. Colleges offering this program assist students in obtaining employment with organizations serving people with disabilities while students are in school and/or upon program completion. Field experiences for students provide opportunities for students to pursue their career paths.

Diverse career specialization possibilities prepare students for specific employment opportunities: educational, vocational, early childhood, residential, and community studies. Graduates may continue in college or university degree programs or advance within their agencies. Students often transfer to four-year programs to earn degrees in special education, social work, speech-language pathology, interdisciplinary studies, and service agency administration.

Purpose of this Guide

This Guide has been prepared to provide information and guidelines to Community College personnel who are administering and coordinating programs designed to prepare paraprofessionals to work with individuals with disabilities in community settings. Specifically, this guide is for administrators and coordinators managing the "Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion," as it was developed by the Developmental Disabilities Institute of Wayne State University. (In this document, the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion is also referred to as the "Human Services Program" and the "Special Needs Paraprofessional Program", titles under which it has been implemented in several Michigan community colleges.) It may also be used by personnel who are managing other disability-content programs.

II. THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE INITIATIVE

Features of the Initiative

The Developmental Disabilities Institute's Community College Initiative was supported by federal funds and designed to address issues relevant to training paraprofessionals who work with, or plan to work with, individuals with disabilities and their families. Paraprofessional training was developed through community college coursework. The Community College Initiative also included strategies for building inclusive school and community environments while increasing the capacity of workers to support people with disabilities in actualizing their full potential.

Paraprofessional training programs are currently available through several community colleges in Michigan. These colleges include Schoolcraft College in Livonia, Alpena Community College in Alpena, and Muskegon Community College in Muskegon. The aim of these programs is to develop career paths and employment opportunities for paraprofessionals who work with children, youth, and adults with disabilities. These programs educate people with disabilities and family members about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and their civil rights for inclusion in the community. Additionally, these programs inform people of other state and federal policies, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), codes, laws and services through the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Special Education, and the Michigan Department of Community Health.

The Community College Initiative was developed and implemented with the following pivotal features:

- Systems Change
- Diverse Students From Diverse Backgrounds
- Values-Based Curriculum
- Academic Skill Development
- Career Path Development
- Support to Programs
- Technical Assistance Materials

Systems Change

Enhanced Paraprofessional Roles: This project offered people entering the field at the paraprofessional level the opportunity to pursue a career path that will allow them to obtain higher education and job advancement within the field. By working in conjunction with community colleges, state agencies, and universities, trainees realized the high potential for personal growth and career advancement associated with their occupation. This initiative assisted in putting to rest the mythology that direct care is a devalued, dead-end job.

The traditional approach to paraprofessional training emphasized teaching technical skills without giving the trainee a broader context for using those skills. The curriculum developed through this initiative includes guiding values, and assists graduates with decision-making in the field. It starts by providing the trainee with the guiding value of people with disabilities as people, first. Furthermore, it offers guidance in viewing community integration, presence, participation, and human relationships as valued outcomes to be achieved in the lives of all people. Educational experiences and internships help students learn how to support persons with disabilities in their communities and other natural environments.

In 1996, major changes were made to the Michigan Mental Health Code. After years of an interdisciplinary approach to writing the annual Individual Plan of Service (IPS) for persons with disabilities, the Code now mandates an approach centered on and directed by the consumer. The person-centered approach focuses more on the individual's ideas and dreams and less on evaluations of professionals. This leads to the paraprofessional having a role at these meetings as "facilitator," which is clearly a more important and respected role than in the past. The goal is to focus on the dreams, wants, and visions for future independence of children and adults receiving Mental Health Services. Paraprofessionals are key participants at person-centered planning meetings because they frequently spend more time with the consumers than professional staff and, therefore, can provide support so people with severe disabilities can express their dreams and ideas.

In the educational setting, as well, new guidelines and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act recommend more involvement by students in their career planning. With student-directed planning, schools are increasing their efforts to include the student, as well as parents, in planning for students in Special Education. The paraprofessional's role in educational planning is increasing as more instructional aides are hired by school districts to assist and support students with disabilities in regular classroom settings. This close daily contact between students and paraprofessionals makes paraprofessionals an integral part of IEPC meetings.

Increased Community Awareness: Many people—within colleges and across communities—do not understand or appreciate disability-related issues. Through marketing, recruitment efforts, and college courses, this initiative increases awareness of:

- the value of and strategies for school and community inclusion of persons with disabilities,
- Michigan's extensive independent living system, and
- workers with disabilities as a growing resource for employers.

Diverse Students from Diverse Backgrounds

There is a need to increase the number of minority group members working in human services, special education, and related fields. Typical student bodies at participating community colleges represent persons from various cultural backgrounds, age groups, and educational backgrounds. Non-traditional students involved in this initiative include displaced homemakers and persons from rural areas.

Values-Based Curriculum

The curriculum developed through this initiative is referred to as "The Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion" and will be described in detail later. This curriculum strongly communicates and reinforces guiding principles and values based on promoting dignity and respect of people with disabilities and their families. The curriculum supports service delivery in natural environments where people with disabilities have opportunities to participate in programs and activities that are within their communities and typical settings for their age and culture. In addition, the curriculum content and field activities are designed to promote respect for cultural diversity, individual preferences, and self-determination. It provides experiences that contribute to an understanding of the "support" approach to service delivery. Therefore the paraprofessional completing the program is equipped with skills needed to work with people with disabilities and in support of their goals and dreams.

Academic Skill Development

Students' skills are developed through the use of a variety of academic techniques such as testing, library usage, and guided reading. Study skills are strengthened and different learning styles are addressed through a structured program.

Career Path Development

An important aspect of this initiative is the development of career paths for paraprofessionals, who typically work in jobs with few incentives for promotion or retention. Strategies to affect both individuals and systems include:

High School-Community College Link: Students from local high schools are recruited by community colleges and begin taking classes during their junior and senior years. Thus many students entered a program after high school graduation having already earned credits toward program completion.

Mentoring: Mentors include instructors within programs (who generally work in the disability field), program coordinators, field supervisors, and others. Mentors served as models and supports for students.

Support to Programs

The Developmental Disabilities Institute, in its role as coordinator of the Community College Initiative, provided support to collaborating colleges in a number of ways. Partner colleges belonged to a Community College Consortium. This group met several times a year and provided a forum for support, information sharing and group problem solving. Funds were available to colleges through several federal grants. These funds provided student tuition and other types of financial support to students needing assistance and funded staff time for program development and enhancement. Relations maintained by DDI with state agencies and national organizations helped keep programs informed of the latest innovations from the field and assisted in job prospects for students.

Technical Assistance Materials

In collaboration with community partners, staff of the Developmental Disabilities Institute developed and provided materials that enabled colleges to replicate the two-year Associate's Degree program in Human Services. Technical assistance was offered to each partner community college by staff of DDI. Assistance included consultation around program development, the provision of training for administrators and instructors, assistance with student recruitment, provision of recruitment and program materials and on-site, phone and mail consultation. Program materials developed by DDI enabled colleges to structure their programs to meet state personnel training while maintaining the guiding values of this initiative.

Recruitment Materials

- Program flyers, brochures and program announcements
- A student recruitment booklet
- A student recruitment video
- A table-top recruitment display
- Sample of a public service announcement
- Sample student recruitment plans

Administrator's Materials

- Sample application packets for submission to the State Department of Education for Instructional Aide Approval
- An Instructors' guide
- An Administrator's and Coordinator's guide
- Career guidance packets

Curriculum Materials

- One-year certificate and two-year Associate's Degree programs outline and curriculum
- Course syllabi for Human Services Program (HSP) courses
- Complete instructor guides and student materials for HSP courses
- Special topic series for instructors and students
- A list of videos to support program content

Student Materials

- Human Services Program Student Handbook
- Disability Terminology guide
- Student specialization guides for program

III. FOUNDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The mission of the Developmental Disabilities Institute is based on a vision of communities that include, value, and support all of their members. The Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion is based on these guiding premises and is designed to instill these values in its students.

Curriculum materials promote maximum inclusion of individuals with disabilities in everyday activities and in their communities. Coordinators managing this curriculum are expected to respect and value these guiding premises too. These values are:

- People with developmental disabilities and their families should be fully included in the life of their communities — in home, school, work, worship, and recreation environments.
- Planning should focus on each person's *dreams*. The support and assistance paraprofessionals provide should build on the person's dreams. Increasing choices and community learning opportunities is a priority.
- We all grow from being with each other, supporting each other, and valuing our individual differences and diversity.
- People with developmental disabilities develop skills and contribute to our communities.
- To insure exemplary services and supports, service providers must pursue ongoing training and possess the values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to work effectively with and for those persons who are their customers.

Person First Language

The materials used in the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion use *person first* language. This means that language and terminology often associated with speaking about people with disabilities focus on the individual as a person first, with the disability being of secondary importance. We now speak of *"people with disabilities"* instead of "disabled people" or "the disabled." We say *"a child who has Epilepsy"* instead of "an Epileptic"; *"a boy who has Down Syndrome"* instead of "the Downs boy."

Terms that are unnecessary, stigmatizing or stereotyping should always be avoided. Ask yourself, "Is it even necessary to refer to the disability or can the same thing be accomplished by not referring to it?" In other words, will saying "the woman" accomplish the same thing as saying "the woman who is mentally impaired." It is important to remember that speaking and writing are our primary means of communication. How we verbalize reflects our sensitivity to the emotions and feelings of our fellow human beings.

Coordinators are urged to always use person first language. Students, as part of their learning experience, should be required to use person first language.

Program Needs Assessment

Before establishing a new program at a community college, a needs assessment is advisable. In conducting a needs study, it is often useful to review information from the Occupational Outlook Handbook. The 1990-91 Edition contains information about the following occupational titles relevant to

paraprofessionals working in services for persons with disabilities: Human Services Workers (D.O.T. 195.267-014 and .367) and Teacher Aides (D.O.T. 099.327-010; 219.467-010; and 249.367-074, and -086).

Establishing Community Linkages

The Coordinator should communicate and collaborate with:

- School districts,
- Service agencies,
- Advocacy and support groups,
- Employment services,
- Chambers of Commerce,
- PTAs and other parent groups in the community college geographic service area

The Coordinator should educate, recruit potential students, and assume the role of leader, encouraging the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the community. The Coordinator should be present to speak at meetings, seminars, and in work groups to recruit students on an ongoing basis. Moreover, he or she should ensure that these agencies, consumer, and parent groups are working together for the integration of all people in every aspect of the community.

Developing An Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee should be developed and meet at least two times yearly. The purpose of this group is to assist in recruitment, make sure the community is aware of the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion, and ensure that the course objectives are appropriate and are being met. The Advisory Committee can also assist by brainstorming ideas to ensure that the curriculum is updated continuously and that it prepares paraprofessionals, parents and others taking these courses to support persons with disabilities as participating and included members of their communities.

Membership in the Advisory Committee should include a current student in the program, a person with a disability and/or a parent, a teacher in the program, as well as members from service agencies, businesses, advocacy groups and others. Seven to ten members is ideal. The Committee should invite new members periodically in order to remain enthusiastic and on target with curriculum objectives.

Determining Program Direction

Persons with disabilities, as well public policy, indicate where paraprofessionals are needed and the support they are required to provide. ADA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) have provided mandates for including and accommodating people with disabilities in their communities.

Paraprofessionals are needed to assist individuals with disabilities in living, working and going to school in community settings. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to move from group homes to apartments, from special schools to their neighborhood schools, and from special pre-school settings to Head Start or generic child care centers. Career opportunities for paraprofessionals now include: instructional aide in inclusive classrooms, residential support worker, and job coach or employment advisor. These are likely to continue to evolve.

Program direction that is responsive to the service needs of persons with disabilities helps to ensure interest in the program. This training and experience can be a stepping stone to a Bachelor's Degree in related fields that will offer more employment options, such as teacher, support coordinator, case manager, etc. Parents, too, can benefit from the valuable training and experiences involved in the Human Services/Special Needs Paraprofessional certificate or Associate's Degree.

Program Certification

Community colleges require approval from the Michigan State Board of Education to offer vocational certificate and Associate's Degree programs. Where the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion prepares students to work as instructional aides in the public school, additional approval is required. Programs must meet specific criteria set forth in Rule 340.1794 (b) by offering instruction that addresses specific competencies outlined in Section IV – Curriculum Development. More details are provided below, but the requirements include:

- Normal child development and the impact of disability on child development
- Identifying and recognizing disabilities
- Special Education rules and regulations
- The impact of a child with a disability within the family unit
- Communication, language development, and leadership skills within the classroom
- Instructional strategies, behavior management techniques
- Medical conditions and procedures including, but not limited to, seizure activity, tube feeding, catheterization, and first aid

Community colleges grant a certificate or an Associate's Degree upon completion of all program requirements. In some college programs, students determine the certification they receive by the area they choose for their field work. For example, at Alpena Community College, if a student completed his/her practicum in a residential setting such as Supported Independent Living, that student would be entitled to receive a Residential Certificate that may be approved by the Michigan Department of Community Health and local

Community Mental Health Boards. The student may request this approval from either body to determine if his/her program met some or all these agencies' training requirements for direct care staff in Adult Foster Care homes. Other certifications include:

- Instructional Aide
- Employment Training Specialist
- Early Childhood Certification
- General Studies

A different format is used by Schoolcraft Community College, whose Special Needs Paraprofessional program offers coursework and practicum experiences in various settings. Their Associate's Degree indicates ability and skills for working in any of the aforementioned human service, education, or related fields.

Staffing Considerations

Every effort should be made to employ instructors who believe and expect that persons with disabilities can succeed in every aspect of community living. It is essential that teachers hired for these courses believe in the philosophy of inclusion.

Hiring the Coordinator

Most importantly, the Coordinator should be a person who:

- believes in the inclusion of all persons with disabilities in their communities and is familiar with laws that mandate this philosophy;
- is familiar with the curriculum and is able and ready to step in, if necessary, to teach it;
- is familiar with services, agencies, advocacy groups and the field work placement opportunities in the community; and
- is actively involved in the recruitment of students and is familiar with employment options to help in that effort.

College Counseling

The college administrator and/or Coordinator should be actively involved in educating and updating the counseling department regarding career opportunities for students interested in the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion. The Coordinator should maintain ongoing contact with the counseling department to ensure enough brochures, flyers and other recruiting materials are available to students.

Disability Support

The Coordinator should make assistance available to instructors, guest speakers and students and advise instructors of the need to provide appropriate accommodations and support for students. Assistance should be provided to persons with disabilities through technology or classroom modifications, as necessary. Instructors should be reminded to ask if assistance is needed at the beginning of each course to assure that modifications in teaching strategies meet the needs of persons with disabilities. The disability support services of the college should be enlisted to help provide learning assistance and accommodations for students.

Job Placement

The Coordinator should meet with the college's career and job placement department in order to educate staff and ensure that information regarding career opportunities in the human service and education fields are available for students.

IV. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Content of the Curriculum

The Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion contains theoretical study and practical experience delivered in a variety of ways, including lectures, media presentations, group activities, supervised field work, and independent study. The community colleges which have adopted the curriculum present the core educational experiences in a variety of ways, yet all address the competencies needed by paraprofessionals who support persons with disabilities in their communities.

The Core Curriculum

The core of the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion includes coursework which addresses all of the competencies identified as necessary for paraprofessionals providing support to persons with disabilities in community settings. The areas and competencies include:

Seeing People First

- Identify basic human needs and discuss their role when working with persons with developmental disabilities.
- Define developmental disability.
- Utilize observational skills in assessing a person's abilities and needs.

Viewing Historical Perspectives

- Demonstrate a knowledge of the history of treatment and care of persons with developmental disabilities.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of normalization and their practical applications.
- Identify the issues involved in community resistance and acceptance of community integration of persons with disabilities.
- Understand how values, attitudes, and beliefs can affect service delivery.

Understanding Special Needs of Individuals and Families

- Define and identify support needs associated with mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and mental illness.
- Understand the impact of a child with a disability within the family unit.

The Human Service Delivery System

- Demonstrate an understanding of vocational and educational services for persons with developmental disabilities.
- Define and discuss residential and work options available to persons with developmental disabilities.

Rights and Advocacy

- Understand staff and recipient rights and responsibilities.
- Understand the concept of advocacy and how to use advocacy techniques.

Field Work

The Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion provides students with a strong background both in theoretical knowledge and practical skill development. Each of the disability core classes, including the theory courses, has a field work component associated with it.

Field work is a *supervised educational experience*. Personal and professional growth is facilitated by supervised student support within a functioning service site. Effective field work experiences require clear understanding by each participant of the objectives of field work, relationships of participants, and the phases and expectations of field work training.

Field work is infused into the disability courses of the core curriculum starting with the initial class. Students are gradually introduced to field work through a process leading them from observation to intensive work with children, youths, and/or adults with disabilities:

Field Work — Simple To Complex

PROCESS	COURSE TITLE
Observation	Community Living For Persons With Special Needs
Observation and Hands On	Planning For Community Living
Hands On and Observation	Skills Training and Support
Beginning Hands On Field Work Concepts	Field Work In Human Services
Advanced Hands on Field Work Concepts	Advanced Field Work In Human Services Human Services I & II

Field work is an important part of the learning process in the curriculum. It is critical that students be supported by the practicum instructor and the mentor at the practicum site. The mentor must be a person who meets the standards outlined in the Student Handbook and believes in the values and principles of inclusion in order to make the field work experience a success. Practicum placements may include a variety of facilities: special education classrooms or inclusive classrooms, job training programs, group homes, or other service areas for persons with disabilities. Those students desiring to work as instructional aides, however, must meet specific requirements outlined by the State Board of Education. These requirements are described in the following section.

Areas of Specialization and Employment

Students have the option of earning a Certificate in Human Services after the first year of required credits or the Associate's Degree in Applied Arts or Applied Science after completing the number of credit hours required by their college, usually 36 hours.

Educational Specialization/Instructional Aide Certification and Employment Options: Those wishing to earn an Instructional Aide Certificate must complete the state-mandated 60 semester hours of course work, including the core courses and competencies contained in the Educational Specialization. The State of Michigan also mandates the following field experiences:

- Completion of a practicum experience to include 60 clock hours with students who have various levels of disability in the following educational classifications: severely mentally impaired (SMI), severely multiply impaired (SXI), or trainable mentally impaired (TMI).
- Completion of a field experience to include 30 clock hours in a combination of classrooms involving the following student populations at the elementary and/or secondary levels unless otherwise employed in such a capacity:

classrooms with students who are classified as visually impaired (VI), hearing impaired (HI), or physically and otherwise health impaired (POHI).

Educational settings offering employment to paraprofessionals are special education and integrated classrooms. Instructional Aide, Teacher Aide, and Instructional Paraprofessional are frequent job titles within this area. Paraprofessionals are vital components in special education and inclusive education programs. Integrated classrooms create a need for the specialized support a trained paraprofessional can offer.

Residential Specialization and Employment Options: If a student wants to work in residential settings, he or she can choose the "Residential Specialization." Work options include supporting individuals with disabilities in their homes and apartments and helping them to acquire the skills they need to live successfully in their community. People selecting this specialization may also work as Personal Assistants to persons with disabilities. The program is a two-year program of study leading to an Associate's Degree. Students in this course of study will meet the current state requirements for Residential Service Provider. Students can earn a Certificate in Human Services after the first year's required credits and meet the requirements for Residential Service Providers. Residential service provider requirements require completion of all core courses, competencies contained in the Residential Specialization, and a field work experience in a residential setting.

Some agencies offering employment to persons with degrees in the residential specialization are Supported Independence Programs (SIPs), group homes, nursing homes, special care facilities, and adult/child foster care homes. Jobs as Personal Attendants to persons with disabilities and Case Managers would also fall within the realm of this specialization. Paraprofessionals can work in a variety of settings such as group homes, nursing homes, special care facilities, and adult/child foster care homes as well as new creative alternative home-living arrangements.

Vocational Specialization and Employment Options: Students choosing the "Vocational Specialization," are preparing to work in employment settings with adolescents and adults with disabilities. Students wishing to earn the Employment Training Specialist Certificate must complete the core courses and competencies contained in the Vocational Specialization. They must complete a field work experience in an agency/program offering vocational options to persons with disabilities.

Vocational settings include supported employment work sites, integrated/competitive employment sites, and segregated sites such as workshops. Persons working in this area often teach and supervise working situations for persons with developmental disabilities. They are frequently

referred to as Job Coaches and Employment Training Specialists. These individuals teach job and related skills to people with disabilities to assist them in entering the work-force. Paraprofessionals assist persons with disabilities in supported employment, integrated employment, and in workshops.

Early Childhood Specialization and Employment Opportunities: The "Early Childhood Specialization" prepares students to work with children with and without disabilities in all settings for young children. Along with all the typical settings such as Head Start, pre-schools and day care centers, there are also many agencies serving young children with disabilities and their families in specialized programs. Students have the option of earning a Certificate in Human Services after the first year of required credits. Those students wishing to complete the Early Childhood Specialization must complete the core courses and competencies contained in the Early Childhood Specialization and do their field work in an early childhood setting.

Child Care/Early Intervention Services include day care programs, child development programs, Head Start programs, preschool programs, and other early childhood programs. Some jobs are child care provider, preschool teacher and preschool teacher aide. Day care programs, Head Start programs, preschool programs, and early childhood programs offer rich experiences and employment opportunities for paraprofessionals in the field.

Specialization in Community Studies or General Studies: Some students wish to take a global approach to their education without committing themselves to a specific specialization. Or, they may desire to tailor their education to meet specific employment goals that do not fall within the categories of the other specializations. Programs can be specifically tailored to meet each student's interests and goals.

The content of the Community Studies or General Studies in Disabilities Specialization prepares students to work with persons with disabilities in community settings. This option allows students to create their field experiences by selecting, and often writing, their own goals and objectives. Students wishing to earn their credits in the General Studies Specialization must complete the core courses and competencies contained in the Human Services Certificate and Associate's Degree Programs. Students in this specialization may do field work in a variety of community settings that serve persons with disabilities.

Employment settings that may fit the Community Studies or General Studies Specialization include recreational services, health care, mental health, and advocacy services. Also—an individual assistance aide or personal attendant may be hired by a person with a disability to support her or him at home. They provide support by performing activities that help that individual to successfully remain in her/his home.

Transfer to Four-year Universities – Some Considerations

Students may be able to transfer many of their Associate's Degree credits to a four-year college or university. The student's choice of Bachelor's Degree program will determine which courses are applicable. At Wayne State University, for example, all courses in an Associate's Degree in Applied Arts or Applied Science count toward a Bachelor's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. Academic counseling is needed to determine which courses will count toward specific programs.

V. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Staffing the Program

Hiring Qualified Faculty

Instructors should have a Master's Degree or Doctorate in a human services related field. They should have substantial work experience that includes direct services for individuals with developmental disabilities, including comprehensive supervisory and/or management experience in an agency serving persons with developmental disabilities. The instructors should have experience teaching college courses and/or conducting training programs in human services-developmental disabilities. Instructors should demonstrate commitment — in conversation, actions, teaching, etc. — to the inclusion and support of persons with disabilities in communities. Instructors should possess knowledge of the full range of services and service systems available to persons with disabilities across the lifespan, including state-of-the-art and best practices of the field. Some examples of recruitment sources and strategies for staffing the program include:

Current Staff People: Current staff, capably employed in a job, may be excellent candidates for promotion or transfer to a new or already existing job. Lavin (1990) suggests that staff people be informed and involved, playing an active role in any job, model, or systems change occurring in the place of business.

Current Students or Recent Graduates: Recommended strategies for recruiting students or graduates include:

- Contact college personnel that may assist you in recruiting staff by finding out if any colleges in your area publish lists of graduates looking for work in the Human Services field;
- Consider students performing internships or practicums in agencies (Lavin, 1990).

- Attend Career Days at local colleges and universities.
- Post flyers announcing job opportunities around college and university campuses

Professionals in Other Human Service Agencies: Posting or advertising job opportunities in publications, professional journals, newsletters, bulletins, and newspapers is one strategy to recruit people from this group. Lavin (1990) also suggests that employment agencies be contacted with information regarding job vacancies. In addition, developing a list of agencies, organizations, and publications to notify of staff vacancies may be advantageous in recruitment.

People with Specific Vocational Expertise: Lavin (1990) suggests "customizing" classified ads and job postings to attract a person with specific abilities and knowledge. He also suggests using employment agencies for this purpose.

People with Disabilities: People with disabilities have knowledge, skills, and interests that can be beneficial to the operations of an organization providing service to persons with disabilities. Lavin (1990) suggests utilizing state vocational rehabilitation agencies for recruiting persons with disabilities.

Homemakers and Retirees: Homemakers and retired persons return to the work-force for many reasons. They may have knowledge and skills that are excellent for jobs in the Human Services field. Lavin (1990) recommends exploring specialized employment programs to recruit homemakers and people returning to the labor force after retirement.

Volunteers: Volunteers are primarily used as guest speakers. The use of volunteers may be one option for filling employment opportunities. Volunteers, often used on a part-time basis, can be recruited from volunteer organizations, such as the United Way. The student body can be an excellent source for recruiting volunteers with particular types of expertise.

Supporting and Retaining Faculty

There are many ways to support valued staff. Some of these ways include:

Training: Intermittent training is useful in upgrading and up-dating the skills of existing personnel. Trainings can offer staff new information that they can use and pass on to the students. Support personnel (advisors, counselors, etc.) should also be introduced to the philosophy of inclusion and reminded of the rights assured to persons with disabilities by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Training new staff ensures their success.

Staff Meetings: Staff meetings are key opportunities to exchange pertinent information with staff as well as discuss concerns as a whole. Staff meetings also provide opportunities for problem-solving.

Materials Coordination: It is the responsibility of the Program Coordinator to manage all materials related to the Curriculum. Instructors must be supported

with materials, training, and workshops necessary to make each course successful. Coordinators may want to set-up a materials check-out process for program staff and faculty.

Secretarial Support: Secretarial support can free-up valuable time that may be utilized by instructors and coordinators for student contact or activities that support students. Also, often support staff are the first persons that students have contact with or are the only persons the students can reach. Having support staff in place enables students to get the information they need instead of waiting for less available staff.

Audiovisual Support: Many valuable resources of information are available to students on videotape. Therefore, it is important for college staff to be able to access technology so that information can be provided in alternative formats.

Problem Solving: Open communication is extremely important when it comes to problem-solving. The Coordinator is the college's resource.

Student Recruitment

Student recruitment is a key factor in the development of a successful program. Recruitment efforts can result in solid and continuous enrollment. Targeting recruitment efforts at specific populations can also contribute to the caliber and commitment of students seeking admission to the program. Recruitment should be carefully developed and reflect the uniqueness of the community the college serves; it should be based on the input of a group of community leaders and staff of the college; and it should be multi-faceted.

Developing a Recruitment Plan

To ensure that recruitment efforts are effective and of high quality, a recruitment plan is needed. The Coordinator should work with the college in recruitment efforts and not duplicate the efforts of other departments. Recruitment should focus on agencies and programs that college recruiters may not reach or target. A plan should be systematic and include timelines. The Developmental Disabilities Institute can provide a recruitment video, flyers and other ideas and materials to help community colleges recruit students for the program.

Recruitment Strategies

Recruitment of students can occur at several different levels of the organization and in several settings. Some recommended places for recruiting students follow:

Community Colleges: Relationships with staff within the college can facilitate student enrollment. At a minimum, the following types of individuals should be involved in planning and establishing the program within the college:

- Admissions staff and counselor

- Program coordinators for students with disabilities
- Department chairs and faculty from programs and departments which may interface with the program (e.g., child development, substance abuse, nursing, job placement counselors, etc.)

It is recommended that recruitment activities within the program correspond with activities that are conducted for the college as a whole. For instance:

- Publish articles in student bulletins or school newspaper.
- Post flyers and brochures on boards where students congregate.
- Participate in job/career fairs and mentoring program.
- Participate in all activities targeted at recruiting high school students.

Public Schools: Liaisons with the public schools can assist in bringing high school students into the program during their senior year and after they graduate. Activities may include:

- Place calls to guidance counselors at high schools and arrange for recruitment activities.
- Develop mailing lists of schools and key school personnel. Send out mailings, including registration/application information, dates, procedures, etc.
- Find out which schools offer summer programs and recruit to them; include mentoring and other career development programs.
- Recruit to paraprofessionals working in the schools. Include contact with special education directors and coordinators.
- Invite key personnel from schools to participate on the advisory committee to the program. Include contact person from the vocational center and local special education director(s).

***Vocational Centers*:** Coordination with activities of the district vocational centers can be very helpful in attracting students into the program and can also enhance the vocational center program. Once a vocational center has agreed to work closely with the program, ongoing communication and activities will be necessary. These activities will include:

- Contact district vocational center(s) and arrange to meet with appropriate staff. Establish a contact person within the school.
- Maintain contact/communication with the person designated to coordinate the efforts at the school.
- Attend career development activities sponsored by the school.
- Send recruitment information to selected groups within the school.

Head Start: Since Head Start is mandated to include children with disabilities in their programs, this program is very valuable to staff working in Head Start classrooms. Suggested strategies include:

- Inviting key staff to participate on the program advisory committee.
- Developing a mailing list of all grantees, programs and members of all Head Start advisory committees.

Community Organizations: Each community has directories of organizations that employ paraprofessionals who may be interested in and benefit from the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion. Most organizations that are included in these types of directories provide specialized services for persons with disabilities and their families. Suggested activities for recruitment include:

- Develop mailing lists to include: Interagency Coordinating Councils, Community Mental Health Staff, providers of residential services for persons with disabilities, and other special service providers. Include this list in all mass mailings.
- Write articles and/or press releases for agency/organization newsletters and arrange for publication.
- Inviting representatives from agencies providing specialized services for persons with disabilities to participate on the program advisory committee. Ask committee members to assist in recruitment.

Community at Large: Recruitment efforts to the community at large can result in reaching individuals who may not be aware of the career potential in the area of services for persons with disabilities. Recruitment in this category should include: generic service providers such as day care centers, hospitals, clinics, etc.; people who are unemployed; people who have retired; people who may be interested in exploring new career options. Activities might include:

- Obtain a list of local radio stations and send Public Service Announcements.
- Send articles/press releases to local newspapers.
- Do interviews on local TV and radio stations about the program.
- Develop a mailing list of community groups (e.g., churches, community centers, Urban League, etc.) and mail flyers, brochures, posters. Marketing or Community Relations departments of the college may be able to assist with this mailing list.

***General Supports to Aid Recruitment*:** In general, the Coordinator may facilitate recruitment through supports such as the following:

- Providing student advisement and assistance with arrangements such as transportation.
- Pre-registering students.
- Assisting with applications for financial aid.

Other Program Issues

Establishing Program Evaluation

Community colleges use a variety of tools to evaluate established vocational programs. Many are required by the North Central Accreditation process. The Developmental Disabilities Institute has evaluation tools that can assist the community college in evaluating the program. These tools can be used to survey students, persons with disabilities, families and service agencies to evaluate whether the program is meeting the needs of the community.

Student Retention

Colleges hoping to improve retention and graduation rates of students develop programs that address challenges and disadvantages their students face. Students may need to have academic support in the form of tutoring, college reading/study skills classes, and learning lab opportunities where computer-aided instruction and instructional videos are available. Once the curriculum is up and running, Coordinators must maintain ongoing contact with the students, instructors and field work supervisors. They tell students where to get help when they need it, the sequence of courses to follow, and about available job opportunities. Other problems may be resolved by calling upon existing college resources (e.g., mechanisms for increasing access and retention for minorities and low-income students; programs designed to increase the completion rates of students who enter college on the nontraditional path).

Support to Students: Nothing can replace a good relationship between Coordinator and student to make the learning environment successful. Getting to know the students, and letting them know who they can count on to answer questions and/or solve problems, is key.

Students need to have access to a person who knows the resources of the college and the resources of the community and can call these into action to help students succeed. Keeping in touch with students can be accomplished through semester meetings and feedback forms. Coordinators should:

- Get to know the College's resources, such as financial aid, counseling, career counseling, library, special departments that aid students such as reading/writing resource centers, cultural centers/student organizations.
- Know the community and the resources, both for the Coordinator's use and for the students.
- Know the student population and their needs, academic, financial, and social. Depending on the college location, students' needs may differ. Students from the inner city may have more unemployment and poverty issues, while students from rural areas may require assistance with transportation, etc.

Financial Assistance: Many capable students do not complete college programs for reasons related to family income. It is important that all students have the opportunity to obtain a postsecondary education, even if they cannot afford the cost. Many people are eligible for assistance and many may receive awards based on their demonstrated need. Applications for Federal Student Aid should be obtained in the college's Financial Aid Office. The coordinator may find it helpful to provide assistance in filling out these applications and looking for other forms of financial aid, such as programs for veterans and their dependents, vocational rehabilitation assistance, Bureau of Indian Affairs Tuition Waiver Program, Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education, Single Parent/Homemaker and Sex Equity Program assistance, or private aid resources.

Mentoring Through Field Work

Field work is an important part of the learning process in the curriculum. It is critical that students be supported by the practicum instructor and the mentor at the practicum site. The mentor must be a person who meets the standards outlined in the Student Handbook and believe in the values and principles of inclusion in order to make the field work experience a success. Practicum placements may include a variety of facilities: special education classrooms or inclusive classrooms, job training programs, group homes, or other service areas for persons with disabilities. Most important, however, is the supportive relationships the field work instructors and the mentors form to ensure a valuable learning experience for students.

VI. APPENDICES

A. References

B. Products List

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DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES INSTITUTE
The University Affiliated Program of Michigan

COMMUNITY COLLEGE INITIATIVE

PRODUCTS LIST

I. Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion

College Course Syllabi

The following model syllabi are available for courses taught in the Paraprofessional Program for Community Inclusion:

Community Living for Persons with Special Needs – Syllabus

Planning for Community Living – Syllabus

Skills Training and Support – Syllabus

Field Work in Human Services – Syllabus

Advanced Field Work in Human Services I – Syllabus

Advanced Field Work in Human Services II – Syllabus

A. Course: "Community Living for Persons with Special Needs"
Instructor and student manuals are available.

Seeing People First (November, 1992)

Introduction to the field of disability services. Basic human needs and their role when working with individuals with disabilities. Defining "developmental disability." Utilizing observation when assessing skills.

Viewing Historical Perspectives: Services, Values and Philosophies (December, 1992)

A historical overview of treatment of persons with disabilities and the principle of normalization. Community resistance to community integration and the impact of values, attitudes and beliefs on service delivery.

Understanding Special Needs (January, 1993)

Definition and identification of characteristics common to specific types of disabilities along with an examination of human development and variation in development.

Understanding the Needs of Families (January, 1993)

A look at the impact a child with a disability has on the family and issues faced by the family.

Viewing the Human Service Delivery System for Persons with Disabilities (January, 1993)

An overview of the human services delivery system including educational, vocational, residential and employment options available to persons with disabilities.

Understanding Rights, Responsibilities, and Advocacy (January, 1993)

Learning about staff and consumer rights and responsibilities. An introduction to advocacy and teaching advocacy skills.

Supporting Individuals and Families in the Community (February, 1993)

Developing an understanding of the skills needed to support individuals with disabilities in their communities, homes, schools and at work. An introduction to assessment and assessment skills.

Disability Terminology: What you've heard . . . but never understood (Fall, 1994).

A 30-page collection of frequently used disability terms and their definitions.

B. Course: "Planning for Community Living"
Instructor manuals are available; students receive a readings coursepack.

Individual Rights: Rules, Regulations, and Legislation (January, 1994)

Competency 1:	Understand special education rules and regulations and other relevant legislation pertaining to children and adults with disabilities.
Competency 2:	Understand the role of staff in protecting the rights of consumers.
Competency 3:	Apply the principles of normalization in order to increase quality of services, community integration, and independence

Assessment and Planning 1: Individual Support Planing (January, 1994)

Competency 4: Understand the use of individual program plans.

Assessment and Planning 2: Lifetime Planning (January, 1994)

Competency 5: Demonstrate an understanding of the role of lifetime planning (including Personal Futures Planning, Circle of Friends, IFSPs, IPPSs, IEPs, and MAPS).

Assessment and Planning 3: Service and Support Coordination (January, 1994)

Competency 6: Understand the concepts of case management and coordination of services.

Assessment and Planning 4: Using Observation Skills (January, 1994)

Competency 7: Utilize observation skills to target needs and behaviors

Assessment and Planning 5: Developing Goals and Objectives (January, 1994)

Competency 8: Develop goals and objectives based on consumer history, needs, strengths and dreams.

Using Community Resources (January, 1994)

Competency 9: Describe community resources that can assist in the care and support of a person with developmental disabilities.

Competency 10: Identify organizations and associations that provide services and information to persons with disabilities and their families.

Support Skills for Paraprofessionals (January, 1994)

Competency 11: Understand the skills needed to support persons with disabilities in participating in integrated settings at home, in school, in their communities and at work. (Staff skills and accessing skills of others.)

C. Course: "Skills Training and Support"
Instructor manuals are available; students receive a readings coursepack.

Assessment: Human Behavior, Observation, and Community Resources (January, 1994)

Competency 1:	Understand some causes and sources of human behavior
Competency 2:	Use observation to identify needs, interest and abilities.
Competency 3:	Identify ways to involve community resources in a coordinated service plan.

Intervention Planning 1: Effective Communication and Goal Definition (January, 1994)

Competency 4:	Demonstrate an understanding of the role of communication, language development, and leadership skills within the service setting.
Competency 5:	Define "goals and objectives" and write goal and objective statements.

Intervention Planning 2: Identifying and Implementing Effective Supports (January, 1994)

Competency 6:	Identify appropriate goals and objectives.
Competency 7:	Develop and implement an effective training program to meet selected goals and objectives.

Intervention 1: Instructional Strategies and Task Analysis (January, 1994)

Competency 8:	Define and demonstrate several instructional strategies and behavior management techniques, including verbal assists, gestures/modeling, physical assists, demonstrations, forward chaining, backward chaining, and fading.
Competency 9:	Conduct training session using task analysis procedures.

Intervention 2: Using Schedules and Facilitating Transitions (January, 1994)

Competency 10:	Set-up sample schedules.
Competency 11:	Understand The concept of transition and strategies for facilitating smooth transitions.

Evaluation: Program Evaluation and Documentation (January, 1994)

Competency 12:	Document appropriately for charts, records, and progress reports.
Competency 13:	Evaluate a program plan and make appropriate modifications and revisions.

D. Course: "Field Work in Human Services"

The following manuals are available for this course:

Issues in Disability: Supporting the Self-determination of Persons with Disabilities

An instructor manual and student manual are available. For a complete description please see section II. Issues in Disability Series.

Alternative and Augmentative Communication: Strategies for Paraprofessionals Working with Individuals with Disabilities

An instructor manual and student manual are available. For a complete description please see section II. Issues in Disability Series.

Issues in Disability: Preventing Abuse and Neglect

An instructor manual and student manual are available. For a complete description please see section II. Issues in Disability Series.

Issues in Disability: Preventing Substance Use and Abuse

An instructor manual and student manual are available. For a complete description please see section II. Issues in Disability Series.

Field Work in Human Services Instructor Resource Manual

An instructor manual is available with readings and materials to generate a student readings coursepack. For a complete description please see section II. Issues in Disability Series.

Student Specialization Packet

This packet can be utilized by both the instructor and the student. For a complete description please see section V. Program and Career Planning Materials.

E. Course: "Advanced Field Work in the Human Services"

The following manuals are available for this course:

Issues in Disability: Sexuality, Sexual Abuse, and AIDS

An instructor manual is available with readings and materials to generate a student readings coursepack. For a complete description please see section II. Issues in Disability Series.

Advanced Field Work in Human Services Resource Manual

An instructor manual is available with readings and materials to generate a student readings coursepack. For a complete description please see section II. Issues in Disability Series.

II. **Issues in Disability Series**

Each module of the Paraprofessional In-service Training Series consists of a Trainee Manual and an Instructor Manual with resources and materials needed for successful teaching of the subject matter. These manuals can be obtained individually and are used for in-service training and as content for the courses "Field Work in Human Services" and "Advanced Field Work in Human Service I."

Issues in Disability: Sexuality, Sexual Abuse, and AIDS

Historical and current perspectives on relationship and sexuality issues as they affect persons with disabilities. Supporting appropriate sexual development and expression, preventing sexual abuse, and AIDS prevention are addressed.

Issues in Disability: Supporting the Self-determination of Persons with Disabilities

An examination of what "self-determination" and "advocacy" are and how paraprofessionals in the various service settings can support the self-determination of individuals with whom they work. Also includes strategies for being a good advocate on behalf of persons with disabilities.

Issues in Disability: Preventing Substance Use and Abuse

Addresses the role that alcohol, drugs, and prescription medications have on causing disability. Examines the problem of substance abuse among persons with disabilities and the challenges of finding and providing appropriate substance abuse treatment. Looks at the paraprofessional roles in preventing substance abuse through support, education, and intervention.

Issues in Disability: Preventing Abuse and Neglect

Examines the problem of abuse and neglect experienced by individuals with disabilities. Looks at abuse/neglect identification, reporting and treatment. Paraprofessional roles for preventing abuse/neglect, as well as legal considerations when reporting alleged abuse are addressed.

Alternative and Augmentative Communication: Strategies for Paraprofessionals Working with Individuals with Disabilities

An independent project of the authors listed below. Looks at typical communication development in humans and the effects that disability may have on communication development. Addresses approaches to alternative and augmentative communication as they are used by individuals with disabilities and the paraprofessionals that work with them.

Field Work in Human Services Instructor Resource Manual

An instructor guide to be used in conjunction with HSP 200: Field Work in Human Services. Provides suggested lesson plans and activities for the different topics addressed in the course.

Advanced Field Work in Human Services Resource Manual

An instructor guide to be used in conjunction with HSP 210: Advanced Field Work in Human Services. Provides suggested lesson plans and activities for the different topics addressed in the course.

III. Technical Assistance Series

Technical Assistance Guide for Community College Administrators and Program Coordinators

This guide provides administrators and coordinators with the information to implement the Paraprofessional Program for Community Inclusion in their colleges. Program development strategies, working with instructors, and student recruitment and retention strategies are featured.

Technical Assistance Manual: Instructor Guide to the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion

This guide provides an overview of the Paraprofessional Curriculum for Community Inclusion for instructors teaching one or more theory and field work course in Paraprofessional programs for Community Inclusion. Curriculum use, teaching tips and guidelines, and resources are featured.

IV. Recruitment Materials

Brochures:	Highland Park Community College's Human Services Program Schoolcraft College's Special Needs Paraprofessional Program
Program Flyers:	Associate's Degree, Highland Park Community College and Alpena Community College Certificate program, Highland Park Community College
Recruitment Flyers:	Flyer for individuals currently working in the field. Flyer for individuals not currently working in the field Flyer for young adults, high school students. Informational Program flyer
Recruitment Video:	Recruitment Video
Recruitment Booklet:	Student Resource and Support Guide: Designed to accompany the video, this guide is written in an easy question/answer format to respond to the questions most commonly asked about the Paraprofessional Programs for Community Inclusion.

V. Program and Career Planning Materials

Human Services Program: Student Handbook (June, 1993)

This handbook was designed for use in colleges offering the Paraprofessional Program for Community Inclusion.

Student Specialization Packet

This packet is for instructors and students to familiarize themselves with the different Program specializations, and competencies within those specializations. It is to be used in conjunction with HSP 200: Field Work in the Human Services as well as a counseling tool for Program Coordinators and Instructors.

Products of the Community College Initiative were developed by:

Carol Kent, Ed.D. — Robin Brumlow, M.S.W.
Jean Pfaendtner, M.S.W. — Elise Reid, M.S. (Communication Issues)
Lisa Laliberté, B.A. — Dorothy Witten, M.Ed.
Tom Hainstock, B.A.

in collaboration with members of the Community College Consortium.

Updated 12/17/96